



Placard Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is Placer County implementing the Placard System?

Residents and visitors have asked for this program so that they can easily see the status of a facility's compliance with health and safety standards. A green Pass Placard posted at a facility assures customers of the facility's good operating practices. The Placard Program will only apply to fixed facilities and will not include mobile food trucks, temporary food booths, caterers, etc.

Why Green, Yellow, Red instead of A, B, C?

Sacramento County and Butte County are currently using the Green, Yellow, Red system so staying with the same system allows for regional consistency and is less confusing for the public.

When will it start?

Soft rollout is beginning now. Inspectors are being trained and standardized. During your next routine inspection your inspector will discuss the program with you. After your inspection they will review your inspection report with you and they will inform you of what color placard you would have received if the program had been in place. If you would have received a yellow placard they will discuss what steps you can take to correct violations and problem processes so that they can be corrected. We also have information on our website on "How to Get a Green" that can assist you self-evaluate your facility and see if there are any issues that you can correct before your inspector arrives.

How do we get a green placard?

To obtain a green placard any major violations found during the inspection must be corrected or mitigated before the end of the inspection. For example, if the inspector finds that the dishwasher is out of sanitizer that is a major violation. To correct the violation a new container of sanitizer can be connected to the dishwasher and the dishwasher must be primed. If the facility does not have any more containers of sanitizer then they can mitigate the violation by washing dishes in their 3 compartment sink and sanitize the dishes manually following the proper process (wash, rinse , sanitize). Inspectors always recommend that facilities keep a bottle of bleach on hand just in case this occurs. Another example would be if a prep refrigerator is out of temperature. If the temperature can simply be turned down and the unit can reach proper temperature then it has been corrected. If the temperature cannot be changed then the food must be removed and placed in a working refrigerator (mitigated). If the violation is mitigated and not corrected, then a minor violation will still exist (in this case, a broken refrigerator). A re-inspection will be required before the refrigerator can be put back into use to verify that it has been repaired and is keeping proper temperature.

When will my facility get its first Placard?

All facilities in good standing will be mailed a Green Placard when they renew their permit for 2016/17 between March and June. (Placard will be mailed with permit.)

Where do we post the Placard?

Placard must be posted so that it is clearly visible to the general public as they enter the facility. Under most circumstances this means the placard will be posted within five feet of the customer entrance. Posting instructions will be included with the placard when it is mailed.

If we get a Yellow placard does it have to stay up until our next routine inspection?

No. If you are able to correct the major violations that resulted in the yellow placard being issued in the first place (or have fulfilled the conditions of an existing compliance agreement), then you may call for a re-inspection. Once your inspector completes the re-inspection and confirms that the major violations/ violations of a compliance agreement have been corrected, then the inspector can issue the facility a green placard.

Can we get a re-inspection on the week-end?

Yes. If you think you might be able to get the violations corrected and will need a weekend or after-hours inspection then your inspector will discuss with you what must be completed before you call for re-inspection. They will then provide you the number to call to request a re-inspection after normal working hours.

Are there any costs associated with this program?

Permit fees are not being increased to support this program . Re-inspection fees will be charged as is currently done. If placard is removed and Environmental Health staff must return to site to post another placard, then a re-inspection fee will be charged.

Since the Placarding Program isn't starting until March does that mean we won't be getting an inspection until after March?

No, routine inspections are still occurring. If you receive a routine inspection prior to receiving your placard in the mail, you will be given a soft rollout flyer which will indicate what color placard you would have received if a placard had been issued. Your inspector will also discuss the program with you. This is an excellent time to ask any questions you may still have.

If we disagree with our inspector's assessment of a violation what can we do?

It is always best to discuss it with the inspector there at the facility so they can discuss how they made the determination of major vs. minor. They should also have a copy of the Field Inspection Guide which may also help. If the issue is not resolved then you can contact the Environmental Health office in your area (Auburn or Tahoe) and ask to speak with the CPT Supervisor.

If the inspector finds a violation can they suggest how to correct it?

The inspector cannot suggest a particular vendor (eg. Plumber) but they can give you advice on what to do/try to correct the problem.

Does everyone have to be food safety certified?

Every facility that has open (non- pre-packaged), potentially hazardous foods must have one staff person who has completed and passed the 8 hr. Food Safety Certification class. Other staff must obtain a Food Handler Card (short and basic on-line training). The 8 hr. food safety certification is valid for 5 years. The Food Handler card is valid for 3 years. Inspectors will ask to see the certifications during your routine inspections.

Operators would like to have a short training annually so they don't have to take an 8 hr. class.

We would recommend reviewing the Field Inspection Guide or taking the Food Handler course on-line.

What happens if there is no electricity due to a storm?

If you are a restaurant, then you should voluntarily close the facility until power has been returned (unless you have a backup generator for refrigeration and lights (and hot water heater if electric). (Keeping refrigerator and freezer doors closed will also increase chances of being able to save the food if power remains out for an extended period of time). If you are a market or mini mart you must stop food prep but can still be allowed to remain open to sell gas, pre-packaged food items, batteries, paper goods, etc. Talk with your inspector to discuss what is and isn't acceptable. A facility open without power can be grounds for immediate closure. If facility is without power and is found to be continuing with food prep by Environmental Health staff, facility will then be required to close and facility will be posted with a red placard. (Lack of electricity will be noted on placard as reason for closure).

If facility has multiple toilets and one is not working, can facility still remain open?

Yes, as long as there is a working toilet available for use.

We are having problems with fake service dogs. If the inspector finds a dog inside our facility can we be closed?

Facilities throughout California are having this problem and it is a difficult one to solve. We will not close the facility, however, we do expect the facility to be as pro-active as possible. Please read and print out copies for your staff of the ADA's FAQ on service animals and the ADA 2010 revised requirements for service animals. Both of these documents are available on our website under Permits, Forms and Fees- Food Program . Please note question 32: dogs are not allowed to sit on the seats or be fed at the table.

I have a large supermarket that has a deli, meat and bakery departments. Will each department receive a placard? Will the coffee and sushi kiosks inside supermarkets receive their own color coded placard?

In Placer County the individual departments inside a supermarket are not permitted separately so each department will not receive its own placard – only the placard at entry way doors will be required.

Some supermarkets have coffee or sushi kiosks. If these are operated separately and have their own individual permit, then they will receive their own placard.